

THE SOCIETY

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting in 1964 was held on 7th April. Professor W. F. Grimes, C.B.E., F.S.A., was elected a Vice-President. Otherwise, there were no changes amongst the Officers and Council. In May, another Vice-President, the Bishop of Buckingham, was translated to the See of Southwell, but we are glad that he remains a member of the Society.

OBITUARY

Ivy, Lady Pigott-Brown, a Vice-President of the Society, died in February. Lady Pigott-Brown was the daughter of Admiral William Pigott, whose family have been so prominent in Buckinghamshire for many centuries and have resided at Doddershall since the early sixteenth century. She was always a good friend to the Society, and welcomed members there on several occasions, the last being on 25th March, 1961, when the tour of the house was characteristically broken off in order to watch the Grand National, in which her grandson, Sir William Pigott-Brown, was riding.

Other deaths reported in 1964 were Mr. Julious L. Stern, an American who contributed an article to the *Records*, Vol. 17, Part 1; The Rev. C. W. Thompson, Vicar of Marsworth; Mrs. R. C. Hazell; Mrs. Mr. R. MacDonald; C. H. Moore; and W. E. Plater.

IVINGHOE

The second year of the dig at Ivinghoe, sponsored by the Society, was continued for three weeks in good weather in August by Professor S. S. Frere and Dr. M. Cotton.

Professor Frere's summary of the results of the dig is as follows:

Three sites were investigated:

- (i) A section was cut across the defences on the south side of the hill where surface indications suggested the presence of two ditches. There were no remains of the rampart *in situ* except some post-holes marking the line of its front and back. All the rampart material had fallen back into the main ditch, which was of the same deep, narrow profile as found in 1963. The outer ditch turned out to be a shallow U-shaped hollow, representing a scarping of the hill-side rather than a true ditch. It was clear once again that the defences had not had a long life.
- (ii) A large area in the middle of the hill-fort near the summit was stripped and a further area amounting to about a quarter of the hill-fort was surveyed by proton magnetometer. A number of post-holes and a good many scraps of pottery were found and also one shallow pit, but the absence of large storage pits in both areas was striking. One group of four post-holes in the form of a square suggested that the structure they had supported was a granary. The most important discovery was a number of pieces of bronze: two fragments of sword blade, a razor, and some studs.
- (iii) A further small area on the north side, adjacent to the area examined in 1963, was stripped. Here a number of substantial post-holes was discovered. They evidently belonged to a large building, and more work is required here to trace its plan. A bronze pin was found here.

Though so far we have not recovered sufficient building plans, the results of the 1964 season were important. There is now quite a large group of pottery sherds, and these can be approximately dated by the bronze objects recovered. The interest of this lies in the surprisingly early date indicated—seventh to sixth century B.C., rather than fifth to fourth, as previously thought. The site now assumes a national rather than a merely local importance, since such an early date for the opening phase of the Iron Age in Britain has not been properly authenticated before.

It is hoped to start work on a third and final dig this summer, and an appeal for funds to make this possible has recently been issued to Members.

OUTINGS

The generally good weather last summer enabled all four outings to be enjoyed by a large number of members. After the Annual General Meeting a party went to Stanford Hall, Rugby, the home of Lord Braye. On 16th May Mr. Arnold Baines led an original and highly enjoyable outing to study the parish boundaries of Monks Risborough. This parish, like so many on the edge of the Chilterns, is long and narrow and it would need a long day to walk the complete boundary, but with the help of cars, ten points were visited, then explored on foot. The text and a translation of the original Anglo-Saxon Charter had been circulated to those attending, and Mr. Baines gave an introductory talk at the southernmost boundary near Speen. Stops were made at Pink Hill, Kop Hill, the "foul brook" near Askett, Alscot at Princes Risborough, Great Waldridge on the northern tip, and back across the Icknield Way for lunch at the Plough at Cadsden. After lunch the more active members ascended the "Kings Way" through the woods to Wayland's Stock, near Green Hailey. On an exceptionally fine spring day, with the Chilterns looking their best,

this was a most successful outing and one which it is planned to repeat at some other parish in the future.

The last outing was to Greenwich on 19th September. Over seventy members joined a special launch which took them to Greenwich in time for lunch. There is so much of interest in this great complex of buildings that the four hours allowed gave barely enough time to see the Painted Hall and the Chapel of the College, the restored Wren Observatory, and the National Maritime Museum. E.V.

MEETING IN AYLESBURY

An exceptionally pleasant and well-attended outing took place on 27th June. Members first met at the County Hall, Aylesbury, and heard an interesting address by Mr. R. E. Millard, Clerk of the Peace, on the history of the County Hall and its adjacent buildings. Mr. Millard then conducted members over the building, and showed them many interesting features including the Judges' Lodgings. Members then dispersed, and after visiting places of interest in the town, re-assembled at Green End House where they were cordially welcomed by Mrs. Elliott Viney and other members of the family. The weather was kind, and members were therefore able to enjoy on the lawns the excellent hospitality which the High Sheriff and Mrs. Viney so kindly provided. Many members expressed astonishment at finding such extensive and delightfully quiet rural surroundings in virtually the centre of a busy county town, and all agreed that it was an occasion that would long remain a particularly happy memory. J.F.H.

ERRATUM By an unfortunate oversight, the genealogical table accompanying the article "Mediaeval Charters at Claydon House" by G. R. Elvey in the last issue of Records of Bucks (Vol. XVII Part 3. 1963, pp. 192-6) was incompletely printed. We regret this error and enclose a revised table, which can be pasted over p. 196.

PARISH REGISTERS

The registers of the following parishes, beginning in the years indicated, have been deposited with the Society for safe custody:

Mursley, 1578

North Crawley, 1666.

A.V.W.

NATURAL HISTORY SECTION

THE programme has been a varied one and has covered a wide area.

The year started with a weekend course at Missenden Abbey, the theme of which was "Birds in Britain" with Mr. C. M. Swaine as resident lecturer. A very successful botanical weekend was held in September on the theme "Seeds and Berries". Once again we were fortunate in having Sir Edward Salisbury as our principal speaker.

There have been seven ornithological outings during the year covering Grendon Underwood, Foxcote Reservoir, Wotton Underwood, Weston Turville Reservoir, Newmer Common and two visits to Tring Reservoirs. In spite of a wet evening, the visit to Grendon Underwood was made delightful by the song of nightingales and grasshopper warblers.

There were four botanical outings. One a walk along the bank of the disused canal from Wendover to Weston Turville and the Reservoir to look for marsh and water plants. In this area it was very interesting to find the rare plant *Asarabacca*. Another walk was to Cymbeline's Mount; this was interesting not only botanically but for the history and legends of the area. Late in June several Natural History Societies were

represented when a visit was made to Brazier's End and Dancer's End—at Brazier's End the ground was so thickly covered by spotted orchids it was difficult not to tread on them. About fifty people attended this meeting. A few members took advantage of an invitation from the Bucks. Rural Studies Association to visit the New Forest by coach.

An outing to study the conchology of the Bledlow beech woods was held in July. Though no rarities were found, this was a very interesting meeting which we hope to repeat.

The first of the indoor meetings was held at Tring in conjunction with the Herts. Natural History Society. The subject of the lecture was "The Formation of the Coombes in the Chilterns". This is to be followed by a field meeting in the summer. Other lectures during the winter months were "Chemical Hazards in Food" given by Mr. G. H. Abraham, "Wild Life in the National Parks of Kenya" by Miss M. Hyde and an illustrated talk on birds by Mr. Philip Straw.

A Members' Afternoon, which was very well attended, was held at the County Museum. Members were invited to give short talks and to show slides. Altogether there were twenty-two meetings, several of which were shared with other societies.

The following observations have been sent by Mrs. Susan Cowdy. After bitter weather in March, birds settled down to what proved to be one of the best breeding seasons in recent years. Cuckoos and nightingales were up in numbers, and it was a "Quail year"—these were heard calling from barley fields, mostly along the foot of the escarpment. Numbers of grasshopper warblers again increased with the new forestry plantations in the Chilterns and elsewhere. Spotted flycatchers and house martins, on the other hand, were down in numbers. Most resident birds appear to have come up to their pre-1962/3 numbers with the exception of wrens, kingfishers and herons. Birds of prey, except for tawny owls, continue to drop in numbers, a direct result of the use of toxic chemicals in agriculture and horticulture. Corpses of barn owl, tawny owl and little owl, among other species, were sent in for analysis in 1963 by members of the society and proved to contain various p.p.m. of persistent poisons. Kestrels are rarely seen in the south of the county during the breeding season.

After the harvest, surplus barley straw was burned in the fields; this unfortunately caused widespread fire damage to hedgerows, particularly in the north of the county. The effect of this on habitats and common birds remains to be seen.

Rabbits are once again widespread, though in nothing like the numbers prior to myxomatosis. They appear to be of a nomadic type which live above ground rather than in warrens. Glis Glis (edible dormouse) have caused some hundreds of pounds' worth of damage in Wendover Forest by ringing bark of conifers. The Forestry Commission have accounted for some seventy of these animals, which hitherto have not been considered a pest since they were first released from Tring Park some thirty years ago.

Mr. Geoffrey Glover has collated the more interesting plants seen by members during 1964. The results are as follows:

<i>Helleborus viridis</i>	Green Hellebore	Cryer's Hill; Kingston Blount; Monk's Risborough; Denner Hill
<i>Helleborus foetidus</i>	Stinking Hellebore	Wotton Underwood Lake; Cadsdean
<i>Anemone pulsatilla</i>	Pasque Flower	Near Tring Station in quantity
<i>Ibiris amara</i>	Candytuft	Dancer's End; Lodge Hill; Watlington Hill; Whiteleaf; Cadsdean

<i>Dentaria bulbifera</i>	Coralwort or Coralroot	Cryer's Hill; Coleshill; near Beaconsfield; Chalfont St. Peter
<i>Lotus tenuis</i>	Slender Birdsfoot trefoil	Near Bradenham
<i>Astragalus glycyphyllos</i>	Milkvetch	The Hale, Wendover; Cadsdean; Watlington Hill
<i>Tetragonolobus maritimus</i>	Dragons Teeth	Near Fingest, possibly introduced
<i>Alchemilla xanthochlora</i>	Lady's Mantle	Redland End
<i>Sedum telephium</i>	Orpine	Redland End; Rookwood; Gt. Missenden
<i>Saxifraga granulata</i>	Meadow Saxifrage	Lodge Hill
<i>Chrysosplenium oppositifolium</i>	Golden Saxifrage	Ellesborough Springs; Bledlow
<i>Danaa cornubiensis</i>	Cornish Bladder Seed	Burnham Beeches. This rare plant is maintaining itself in a well-defined area, perhaps spreading slightly
<i>Asarum europaeum</i>	Asarabacca	Near Wendover. This very rare plant is holding its own well in this site where it has been known for many years
<i>Cuscuta epithymum</i>	Common Dodder	Near Bradenham
<i>Galeopsis angustifolia</i>	Narrow-leaved Hemp Nettle	Bradenham; Bledlow
<i>Gentianella germanica</i>	Chiltern Gentian	Near Bradenham; Pyrton Hill; West Hill; Cheddington
<i>Sambucus ebulus</i>	Danewort	Between Dinton and Cuddington; near Aston Rowant
<i>Galinsoga ciliata</i>	Gallant Soldier	Aylesbury
<i>Cicerbita macrophylla</i>	Blue Sow-thistle	Near Pink Hill
<i>Damasonium alisma</i>	Starfruit	Gerrards Cross Pond
<i>Luzula forsteri</i>	Forsters Wood Rush	Monkton Wood, near Redland End
<i>Epipactis sessilifolia</i>	Violet Helleborine	Green Hailey
<i>Epipactis helleborine</i>	Broad Helleborine	Bledlow Woods; Bradenham; Pulpit Hill
<i>Epipactis leptochila</i>	Narrow-lipped Helleborine	Whiteleaf; Cadsdean; Windsor Hill; Crowell Hill; Cryer's Hill
<i>Cephalanthera damasonium</i>	White Helleborine	Cadsdean; Bledlow
<i>Cephalanthera longifolia</i>	Swordleaved Helleborine	Chinnor Hill
<i>Neottia nidus-avis</i>	Birdsnest Orchid	Bledlow Woods; Cadsdean; 1964 was a good year

<i>Herminium monorchis</i>	Musk Orchid	Near Kimble. A very good year in 1964
<i>Coeloglossum viride</i>	Frog Orchid	Pink Hill; Aston Rowant; Lodge Hill; Chalk Pit near Aston Clinton
<i>Gymnadenia Conopsea</i>	Fragrant Orchid	Pitstone Hill; Steps Hill; Kimble. Very large numbers in 1964
<i>Platanthera chlorantha</i>	Greater Butterfly Orchid	Pink Hill; Dancer's End
<i>Ophrys apifera</i>	Bee Orchid	Quarry at Pitstone; near Bradenham
<i>Orchis morio</i>	Green-winged Orchid	Near Beaconsfield
<i>Orchis mascula</i>	Early Purple Orchid	Lodge Hill; Steps Hill

J.E.

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